

SPECIAL INFORMATION REPORT

VIETNAM MORATORIUM DAY (VMD) 15 October 1969

WASHINGTON, D. C., AREA ACTIVITIES

Although the VMD was initially almost entirely a youth and student oriented anti-war project, and is still strongly so, it has escalated into an "against business as usual" program being participated in by a broad-base of anti-war (and/or anti-Nixon) protestants including housewives, academics, businessmen, workers, religious, etc., far beyond the hopes of the originators. Led by persons and organizations, whose names are familiar in the annals of dissent, a great number of people will be involved in the Washington area VMD actions. Supported in large part by long time dissidents, many whose motivation is suspect, it is debatable whether this VMD can have any favorable impact on an administration which must be as desirous of peace in Vietnam as are the pacifists, and, ironically, appears to be making noticeable progress towards a settlement with honor, despite the damaging effect on negotiations wrought by the domestic agitation for termination of U. S. involvement. That VMD will be a comfort to Hanoi seems self-evident.

Although overt opposition to Vietnam Moratorium Committee is generating, there is little time for it to swell into size sufficient to compete with the VMD actions which have had the benefit of enormous expenditures of time, energy, and money as well as vast publicity coverage extended by the media.

As it would be impossible, as a practical matter, for the administration, even if it had the desire and will to accede completely to the loud demands of these demonstrators, to satisfy them in the time "non-negotiably" allotted, it will be interesting to see how many people will be willing to expend the time, energy and money necessary to repeat these performances on the projected escalating scale of two days in November, three days in December, etc.

Although the cumulative total of participants in October's VMD will be large, it is expected to be composed of most of the same people who have been prominent in past anti-war actions -

those students, housewives, religions, professional activists, etc. - whose "business as usual" is most easily varied. Whereas it is expected that this October VMD, with heavy emphasis on religious activities, cries for peace, and appeals for expressions of humanity to man, will for the most part be able to maintain a non-violent atmosphere, it has been indicated that proposed mid-November action may be more belligerent, demanding, and more likely to produce violence. Precautionary measures are being taken by appropriate authorities in an effort to prevent violence and disruption from escalating from any incidents which may occur.

The actual extent of participation cannot be forecast in advance of planned events but much activity has been scheduled for this anti-war moratorium on business as usual - rallies, marches, teach-ins, movies, memorial services and leaflet campaigns. Most Washington area colleges and many area high schools have programs planned.

Washington area coordinators plan to draw all local participants together for a final rally at the Sylvan Theater on the Washington Monument grounds about 6 p. m. University students, and others, are expected to start marches to this area about 5 p. m. for the rally assembly. As this is the height of the rush hour, traffic congestion will also be monumental. A series of speakers, music from a folk group, and finally a speech from Coretta King (Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr.) about 7 p. m. are planned. Mrs. King will then lead a candlelight procession around the White House. It is scheduled to stop in front of the White House about 8:30 p. m. and a memorial wreath will be placed there.

GOVERNMENT

The Civil Service Commission has said - Employees may wear arm bands or "peace" buttons to work so long as "the activity does not disrupt the normal work environment."

Any participation in outside activities during official work hours must be preceded by pre-approval of annual leave otherwise employee will be considered AWOL and face the usual disciplinary measures.

CSC has been telling inquiring Federal agencies, "we don't feel it is appropriate to lend Government facilities for meetings which are designed to influence the making of what is obviously a political decision." But, each agency has the prerogative of allowing or disallowing use of its building for moratorium programs.

HEW and NIH personnel failed to get permission for speeches by Dr. Spock and others at rallies during working hours but, in a compromise, moratorium people were given permission to use the HEW and NIH and the baby Doctor to speak at the HEW auditorium between 12 to 2 p.m. - normal lunch hours.

Dr. George Wiley, NWRO, is scheduled to address Department of Agriculture employees.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development; OEO; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and Commission on Civil Rights have been granted permission for programs. Julius Hobson and Rev. Douglas Moore will speak to the CCR at noon.

About fifty members of Congress have scheduled speaking engagements on Wednesday and plan to discuss Vietnam. Many will make a number of addresses in scattered places - mostly in the eastern United States - some as many as eight and will be sorely pressed to maintain their schedules as will the usual anti-war activist array of speakers who are slotted for innumerable appearances.

A bi-partisan group of seventeen Senators and forty-seven Congressmen gave some air of legitimacy and elevated the level of VMD by sending a letter to the Vietnam Moratorium Committee declaring that they "share your commitment toward ending the war in Vietnam... as soon as possible."

A number of resolutions, pro and con the Vietnam War, have been introduced in Congress and debate has become increasingly acrimonious.

Republican National Chairman Roger C. B. Morton endorsed the moratorium as "great... a good thing... part of our right."

Some twenty or more Congressmen have taken advantage of an old procedural rule to reserve an hour each to make speeches after the House has concluded its business for the day on Tuesday the 14th. It is their intention to speak through the night until noon on Wednesday, the 15th, when the House opens in regular session. Opponents to this move may utilize another rarely used procedural rule to block them - a demand that a quorum of 218 members be present before the session can proceed. A group of Congressmen plans a silent vigil for forty-five minutes at noon on the east steps of the Capitol.

An ad hoc committee of city Government employees has been formed to support the moratorium. They have been asked to gather at 5 p. m. at Pershing Square and then proceed to the Sylvan Theater.

BUSINESS & PROFESSIONAL

Lawyers - A D. C. Lawyer Committee will hold a rally at 1:00 p. m. at St. Johns Church in Lafayette Square. Arthur Goldberg, a speaker.

Business and professional people - will rally at noon at Farragut Square.

COLLEGES

Activities are planned by and at most area colleges although all will ostensibly be open for classes. Most action is at Georgetown and American in D. C. and at the University of Maryland.

Howard University - will be lenient on absences. The University Student Association endorsed the moratorium in principle but declared alliances of black and white students fail. However, liberal art students plan some activities, but probably separate from Vietnam Moratorium Committee actions. A chapel service is planned for 12:30 p. m.

after a march from campus to 14th and U Streets, N. W., at 11 a. m.

Howard Law School - a teach-in - Rep. Lewis Stokes (D-Ohio) will speak.

Federal City College - limited activity - probably on an individual basis.

Georgetown University - open - students not required to attend regular classes. Panels and classes on the war encouraged. President proclaimed "day of prayer and planning for peace." Masses will be said every quarter hour beginning at 9:15 a. m. and Rev. Henle will say a mass for peace at about 4 p. m. and then lead a march to the Sylvan Theater to join the rally. Student government endorsed the moratorium. Student Senate passed a resolution calling on North Vietnam to release by Christmas the names of all American prisoners it holds. "Meal of reconciliation" on Healy Lawn at 6 p. m. followed by town meeting discussion and an 8:30 p. m. candlelight procession through Georgetown on the 14th and a sleep-in on the University front lawn. Law school will hold discussion program from 11:30 - 3 p. m. in John Carroll Auditorium. Ernest Gruening, former Senator from Alaska, to speak. Senator Joseph Tydings (D-Md.) and Frank Mankiewicz to speak at 2 p. m. rally.

George Washington University - Student Assembly passed resolution in support of moratorium. Rep. Henry Reuss (D-Wis.) and Joseph Rauh to speak at 11:30 to 1:30 rally behind Library. Dr. Spock to speak at rally behind Library at 3 p. m. Students plan memorial service at Selective Service Headquarters, 1724 F Street, N. W., at 2 p. m. Will be joined by persons from other communities and campuses.

School of Advanced International Studies (John Hopkins) - All day programming beginning at 7 a. m. and lasting until 5 p. m. when participants will march to White House or Sylvan Theater. Paint-in, films, speakers (Marcus Raskin and Leslie Gelb), panels, etc.

American University - open - but students and faculty may decide individually whether to attend or hold classes. Andy Young (SCLC) and Senator George McGovern (D-S.D.) to speak at a 10 a. m. rally at Woods-Brown outdoor theater. Will join the demonstration at Selective Service Headquarters at 2 p. m. On 14th at 1 p. m. - rally - speakers such as Seymour Hirsch and Sanford Gottlieb (SANE).

University of Maryland - open - plans span 13th through 15th - workshops - mass canvassing of neighborhoods and shopping centers. Outdoor platform and P. A. system supplied by University for rallies on 15th. Afternoon rally on 15th for all area college and high school students. Anti-war guerrilla theater group.

Catholic University - planning a "Day of Dialogue and Discussion." Rev. Andrew Jacobs (D-Ind.) to speak at rally about 1 p. m. which follows a 10 a. m. mass for peace on steps of University library. Workshops to follow the rally.

Dumbarton University, Columbia Union College, Trinity College, and Montgomery College, Takoma Park - students at all plan activities similar to University of Maryland but on reduced basis.

Wesley Theological Seminary - Classes suspended. Students to canvas Spring Valley area passing out anti-war literature.

George Mason College (Fairfax, Virginia) - Mid-day rally, memorial service and candlelight vigil.

Northern Virginia Community College - some limited activity.

SECONDARY & ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Ostensibly a regular school day - many will have some kind of discussion in classrooms or assemblies. High school students have not been asked by Vietnam Moratorium Committee to boycott classes but merely to take part in a "day of reflection" about the war.

Montgomery County - Will take note of moratorium at discretion of staff and students of each school

Fairfax County School Board - Business as usual, but special programs permissible.

Arlington County School Board - Agreed students would not be excused to participate in the moratorium.

Alexandria Schools - Absence only on parental request. Class discussion if desired.

Northern Virginia high schools not expected to place much emphasis on the day. Some classroom discussions likely. T. C. Williams will have voluntary assemblies.

Maryland high schools in area will have some programming. Speakers invited to several - Montgomery Blair, Walt Whitman, and Walt Johnson. Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School adherents hope to have a memorial service and wear black armbands.

District high schools - generally low-key observance. McKinley Tech - discussion - outside speakers. Western - program. - Wilson-9 a.m. assembly program - seminars. Regular classes start at 11 a.m.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Arlington County Democratic Workshop on Civil and Human Rights is urging the citizens of Arlington County to refrain from business as usual and to initiate their own activity in support of the moratorium or actively participate in one of the many forms of study, reflection, or action planned for that day by area groups.

Herbert S. Miller, D.C. attorney residing in Reston, is spearheading plans for a Fairfax County demonstration. Plans include folk music, a non-denominational service in conjunction with a candle lighting ceremony, and a prominent anti-war speaker. Location of meeting not firm - some central Fairfax County site hoped for. This group of Northern Virginians goal will be to get petitions signed by 10,000 to present to Northern Virginia national legislators.

Maryland - State employees not excused to participate.

St. Johns Episcopal Church in Arlington, Virginia - will toll bell for two minutes of each daylight hour. Special services at 7:15 and 11 a.m. for students at Wakefield High School and the Glen Carlyn community.

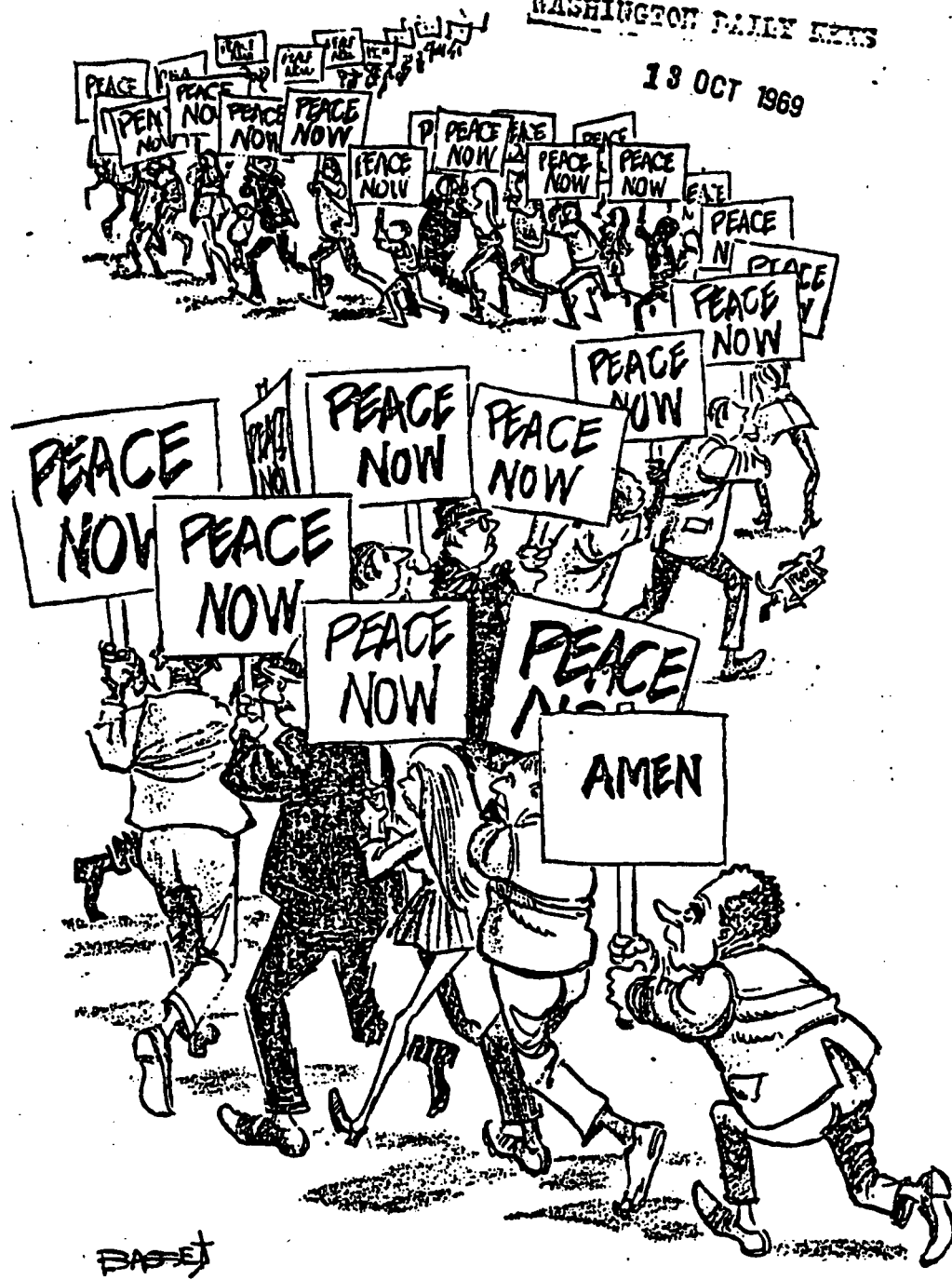
Georgetown University Law Students plan to demonstrate at the Justice Department on the 15th - 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. - to protest the legal and penal standards of this nation. I. F. Stone and Marcus Raskin will speak.

SOURCE: Government and news media.

RELIABILITY: Probably true.

WASHINGTON DAILY NEWS

13 OCT 1969



"As I Was Saying, 'Under No Circumstances
Will I Be Affected Whatever By It'"



WASHINGTON POST

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